



News Release

**U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey**

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Release
April 20, 2000

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National Academy of Science to Review Missouri River Ecosystem Science

For immediate release. On Tuesday, April 25, the U.S. Geological Survey will host a meeting of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Committee on Missouri River Ecosystem Science, to review the status of the Missouri River and flood plain ecosystem. The meeting is open to the public from 9:45 a.m. until 4:30 pm, held at the Columbia Environmental Research Center in Columbia, MO. Federal and state scientists and decision makers, and representatives from several groups with interests in Missouri River management will speak with the committee about Missouri River flood plain ecology and management.

Long-term ecological trends, endangered species, and proposed revisions to the river's management plan prompted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to request the two-year NAS study. The committee of 12 water resources science and management experts will synthesize ecological data and prioritize scientific information needs for improving Missouri River management.

Climatic, environmental, and political conditions in the past 15 years are contributing to a transition in river management. A six-year drought was followed by four years of flooding. The drought and listing of several endangered species initiated a review by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers of its Master Water Control Manual, the plan used to manage water flows on the river. The multi-year revision process was recently delayed by concerns regarding impacts on fish and wildlife populations.

The National Academy of Sciences is a non-profit organization established by Congress to provide independent advice on scientific issues. Through its research arm, the National Research Council, the group convenes expert committees of volunteers to review and synthesize scientific and technical information relevant to public policy. The Missouri River committee draws together experts in engineering, ecology, and water resource planning.

Related internet links:

- Meeting agenda and NAS Committee information:
<http://www4.nas.edu/webcr.nsf/MeetingDisplay2/WSTB-U-99-06-A?OpenDocument>
- Background Missouri River information and maps: <http://infolink.cr.usgs.gov/>
- Directions to the Columbia Environmental Research Center:

<http://www.cerc.usgs.gov/About/drctns.htm>

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